

Exhibit 39



Permanent Observer Mission of The State of Palestine to the United Nations New York

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10 January 2020 – Escalating Illegal Israeli Settlement Activities

10 JANUARY 2020 BY PALESTINE AT THE UN

Excellency,

I regret that I am once again compelled to draw your attention to the illegal colonization campaign being carried out in Occupied Palestine by Israel, the occupying Power.

In every decision and action concerning the Palestinian land, Israeli government and military officials persist in flagrant disrespect of international law and the authority of the Security Council and are even seemingly undeterred by the specter of an investigation by the International Criminal Court, blatantly challenging both the rules-based order and the international community as a whole.

At the most fundamental human level, such actions continue to inflict immense hardship and suffering on the Palestinian civilian population, including thousands upon thousands of families who have been cruelly dispossessed of their land, homes, properties and livelihoods and forcibly displaced. Moreover, these actions severely undermine peace prospects, making the two-State solution on the pre-1967 borders more remote than ever and a one-State, apartheid reality more inevitable, to the detriment of all who live on this land.

From the start of 2020, the Israeli government has continued the same destructive trends as in 2019, escalating settlement activities with the obvious aim of not only entrenching its illegal occupation but annexing our land, an unlawful objective publicly declared by various Israeli officials, including the Prime Minister and members of his Cabinet. As typical of this ruthless occupation, the latest plans for the construction of thousands more illegal colonial settlement units in our land were revealed as the Palestinian people were in the midst of holiday celebrations, undermining spirits and hopes for the new year.

As per this most recent announcement, Israel, the occupying Power, is planning the construction of at least 2,000 more settlement units in Occupied Palestine. These settlements will result in the unlawful transfer of thousands more Israeli settlers to our land and further confiscation and exploitation of our natural resources, all in grave violation of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, and countless United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), which demanded an immediate and complete cessation of all settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

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planning the construction of at least 2,000 more settlement units in Occupied Palestine. The settler units will be built in the Golan Heights and the West Bank, more Israeli settlers to our land and further confiscation and exploitation of our natural resources, all in grave violation of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, and countless United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), which demanded an immediate and complete cessation of all settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

As part of this illegal campaign, Israel, the occupying Power, has also continued its demolition of Palestinian homes in further grave breach of international humanitarian law, which prohibits the destruction of civilian property. Just this week, demolition orders were issued to 12 Palestinian homes in the Isawiyeh neighborhood of Occupied East Jerusalem, which has been most heavily targeted by this illegal policy. If carried out, these demolitions will render yet dozens more Palestinians, including women and children, homeless. In 2019, it was documented that the occupation authorities destroyed or seized 617 homes and structures in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, forcibly displacing 898 Palestinians. In addition to homes, demolished properties included many donor-funded humanitarian projects, agricultural structures, water pipes, wells and solar panels, with the majority located in so-called "Area C" of the West Bank, openly targeted by Israel for annexation.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, who is leading this frenzied, illegal colonization campaign, has continued to openly threaten annexation, bragging about his intentions to annex the settlements and the Jordan Valley and with the support of the United States of America. In this regard, in total contempt of international law and the repeated calls of the international community to cease these illegal actions, he recently declared: *"We are going to bring US recognition for our sovereignty in the Jordan Valley [and] in all the settlements, those in the blocs and those that are beyond it".*

His threats, which have escalated with every round of the ongoing Israeli election campaign, are being loudly echoed by others Israeli officials, including the so-called "Minister of Defense", who is in full collaboration with settler leaders and is a settler himself and who recently mocked the United Nations, saying *"I am not the United Nations... I have a policy of fully supporting the settlements"*. Such comments, and more so their illegal plans and schemes, have been undoubtedly emboldened by the absolute political support and diplomatic protection of such impunity by the current US administration.

In this regard, it is stunning that the US Ambassador to Israel is actively promoting the illegal positions and objectives of the occupying Power in full complicity with its crimes. He is on record as stating just this week, using Biblical terminology to refer to the occupied West Bank, *"when we came into office the lingering issues included three of significant importance: the status of 1) Jerusalem, 2) the Golan Heights and 3) Judea and Samaria. We have approached them in ascending order of complexity."* Following the declarations of the US administration in December 2017 on Jerusalem, in March 2019 on the Occupied Syrian Golan, and in November 2019 on Israeli settlements, the meaning of such statements is starkly clear in encouraging and supporting Israeli settlement activities and annexation plans.

All Israeli colonization measures in Occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, must be condemned and neither threats nor attempts at annexation should go unchallenged. Such actions constitute flagrant breaches of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and direct violations of United Nations resolutions, including numerous Security Council resolutions that have explicitly demanded the cessation of such illegal policies and practices.

It is the duty of the Security Council and the High Contracting Parties to the

10 JANUARY 2020

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It is the duty of the Security Council and the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to act to uphold the rule of law, ensure accountability, and bring a halt to this illegal behavior, which is depriving our people of its patrimony and rights, including the inalienable right to self-determination, forcibly displacing them from their land, causing widespread human suffering and humanitarian need, and undermining the chances for a peaceful solution. Moreover, it is the duty of the International Criminal Court to ensure accountability for such war crimes, which these colonization activities, perpetrated across more than five decades incessantly and systematically, clearly constitute.

Absent consequences, it is clear that Israel, the occupying Power, will persist with such crimes, irreversibly dismantling the two-State solution and destroying the foundations of a peaceful solution. The Palestinian leadership therefore reiterates its call upon the international community, at the forefront the Security Council, to act urgently to address this illegal situation in accordance with international law and the resolutions adopted by its highest organs.

Only accountability can end such impunity, deter future violations and salvage the prospects for a just peace that will allow the Palestinian people to finally live freely and equally in their homeland, side by side with all of their neighbors in peace and security.

This letter is in follow-up to our 678 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 11 December 2019 (A/ES-10/xxx-S/2019/xxx) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Signature_English

Dr. Riyad Mansour

Minister, Permanent Observer

of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

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